

THE SLEEPING BEAST



Warm Spring

Year of The Courageous Serpentborn Viper

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The Sleeping Beast

On the Education of a **Plastic shamMAN IN A METAFICTIONAL WORLD**

Containing a collection of adventures in realms of mystery and magick, this book will transport the reader to another world.

The following tales are recounted as translated from the Zifler script in the original manuscripts. Every attempt has been made to preserve the meanings of the original text, but there will be variance from the original document. This is unavoidable in translations, but the editors do apologize. Footnotes have been added to help clarify the translation.

The following document is a work of fiction and should be treated as such. The document was not found in eastern Turkey written in ink on vellum dated back to the 13th century. And it was not translated from an ancient and arcane language.

The existence of this document has not previously been censored or its existence hidden, and the publisher risks no repercussions publishing it now.

Everything is fine.

A tale based very loosely upon a true story...
I mean technically, yeah, kind of true, maybe.

Reading Time: 17 Minutes



AN INCURSION TO
The Ribcage Castle



In which our hero embarks on an Incursion into the Foglands to infiltrate the Ribcage Castle of the Last King. And in which we discuss the Celebration of the Poison Woods, The Path of the Warrior, and the denizen known as the Oil Cloth Rebels.

These are the tales of Freeman Harbinger: Psychonaut and Wizard. Apprenticed under the eldritch being known as the Sleeper, Harbinger learns the trade of wizardry by venturing deep into the collective unconscious known as the Shadowlands. There he will face monsters and madmen, demons and dead gods, kings and conquerors and cannibals. The Sleeper has told Freeman Harbinger that he has the potential to be a great Psychonaut, if he lives that long. The Shadowlands are hungry and they are searching for their next meal.

From Wiktionary

Noun. **psychonaut** (plural psychonauts) *A person who explores his or her own psyche.*

Noun. **wizard** (plural wizards) *Someone who uses magic, mystic items, and magical and mystical practices.*

Last time...

Harbinger found himself tasked by a local Free Tribe with slaying the Bakumera. He was both assisted and deceived by the Monoceros, and in the end sacrificed the legendary blade Bloody Grin to banish the Bakumera (he bribed it to go away).

"Hilly* was spotted there?" Bobby asked as I walked through the store house examining reliquaries and artifacts.

"That's what the Sleeper told me."

"But you're going alone?"

"That seems to be par for the course. Apparently the story likes it when I work alone. At least I'll get to use those cheesy action movie lines. 'No. I work alone. You'd only get in my way.'"

"Would we though?" Bobby asked as I paused and examined the finger bone of an ancient hero in a glass cylinder.

"Of course not. I'm still as green as dandelion shoots. You'd be an enormous help. What do you think? The reliquary of Elder Cain? It keeps servants of the empire at bay?"

"You said you're meeting oil cloth rebels though. They're still technically servants of the empire."

"They are? They're rebels."

"They haven't escaped their bonds yet. They're rebellious servants, but they're still servants."

"I think I'll attune it nonetheless," I said, picking up the cylinder by its chain, "Nothing says I have to use it the whole time."

"Fair enough. It does make you obvious to enemies though, a big neon sign saying: 'don't go there!'"

"Well then I don't use it until they've seen me."

"You're still attuned to Bloody Grin," Bobby pointed out, "You can use that if they've seen you. That will settle the problem."

* Hilly refers to Churchill Ravana, the former apprentice of Archmage St. Pierre who betrayed Bobby and Harbinger months earlier.

"The Bakumera took Bloody Grin. I have no idea if I can draw the sword back from wherever the great old monster took it. And even if I can draw Bloody Grin, I'm only doing that if there's no bystanders anywhere nearby. Otherwise Bloody Grin will make quick work of them too. At least the reliquary will only send them running."

"So that's it? You're going into the Ribcage Castle* and that's all you're taking?"

"All I have to do is help them get their kids ready to take the next step in the Path of the Warrior. It's a teaching assignment. Elder Cain's wisdom tooth here is only a back up in case we get exposed."

"You said that out loud," Bobby pointed out.

"Yeah, I did. Okay, so I've drawn the story's attention now. So I'm going to get exposed. And when I get exposed I can use the tooth like a mobile electric fence."

"Yeah, but you won't be able to protect the kids or the rebels."

"Do you have a better idea?"

"Something that doesn't force you to abandon the people you're supposed to protect."

"While I still have limited options. I have the Reliquary of the Elder Cain, which scares the people I'm supposed to protect. And I maybe possibly have Bloody Grin, which kills them."

"You've managed to control Bloody Grin twice. Why don't you give yourself some credit? The stories about you describe Bloody Grin as your sword now. You know that right?"

"Okay. Let's assume that the genocidal sentient blade isn't gone completely. I fed it to the artifact devouring monster. But let's assume it isn't gone. Assuming I am still able to draw Bloody Grin, maybe I can stop myself from murdering a bunch of kids with it. How promising does that sound? I'll take my usual back ups."

"The Ring of Li Jun Fan, the Crimson Cord and the vertebrate of First Hero? Which means that you can punch like Bruce Lee and take hits like Jackie Chan. I mean that's a decent

* The Iron Castle of the Locust King exists in every one of the Major Realms. In the Foglands, the Castle is a skeletal husk of its former glory.

AVOID DANGEROUS CULTS
JOIN OURS



foundation I guess. But that means the only way you can protect the kids is by going all Gandalf on the bridge. You shall not pass, and that never ends well."

"Story of my life."

It's been about a year since the last event in this autohagiography. A lot happened, but I haven't processed most of it, so I won't be recounting it here. I know. I suck. But what you need to know, dear reader, is that it's been eleven months since I last put pen to paper. Dragon's Day is upon us again. I've been chasing the trail left by Churchill Ravana, but still haven't found him. Hilly appears to be working with the Hungry Empire, but also double crossing him. They seem to be tolerating him or attempting to kill him on a case by case basis. I was only attempting to kill him.

I met my contact at a disused town fountain in the ruins that were the Ribcage Castle. My contact was a young man with pale skin and yellow eyes that screamed of vitamin deficiency. I made a series of secret hand signs, and he nodded.

"You must be Harbinger."

"You must be Thaddeus Daggerhand."

"Tad, please. We have a problem. The Knights of Unity has discovered the time and location of the initiation ceremony. We have chosen a new location has, but we can't change the time and date."

"You're still going forward with the ceremony, despite the discovery? You're risking those kids' lives. They need an initiation, not a baptism of fire where they all die."

"The Firebird arose from its baptism of fire. They can do the same." Tad said, "The ceremony is necessary. We cannot afford to delay it a whole year until the next Dragon's Day. Our applicants are part of the rebellion. We need them on the front lines."

"The Firebird can resurrect itself from its own ashes. Can these kids? Do you at least know how the location was tumbled?"

"No. We suspect an informant in our midst. But we haven't found them."

"Which means the ceremony is still at risk."

"Everything is a risk in the Ribcage Castle."

Tad walked me through the streets of Ribcage Castle. I recognized streets and alleys from my time spent in the Mirrored City. That's because the Ribcage Castle was a part of the Mirrored City once. The Ribcage Castle is the Mirrored City, or rather all that is left of it in the Foglands. The Foglands is the age after the fall of the Hungry Empire. A vestigial chunk of the Hungry Empire survives in the Foglands. It crouches like Gollum in the rotting husk that was Ribcage Castle. Nobles* in rotting finery still walked about as if they have power. They are imperial subjects who haven't the courage to abandon the ruins of the empire. These desperate souls scrounge what they can. And the remnants of the Men of Black and White continue to oppress and abuse anyone within arms reach.

"We ought to reschedule this," I said to Tad, trying again.

"That isn't an option. Leave if you like, but the initiation moves forward."

"I'm not going anywhere. I'm here to help, even if that means standing on the bridge and holding off the balrog."

"What is a balrog?" Tad asked.

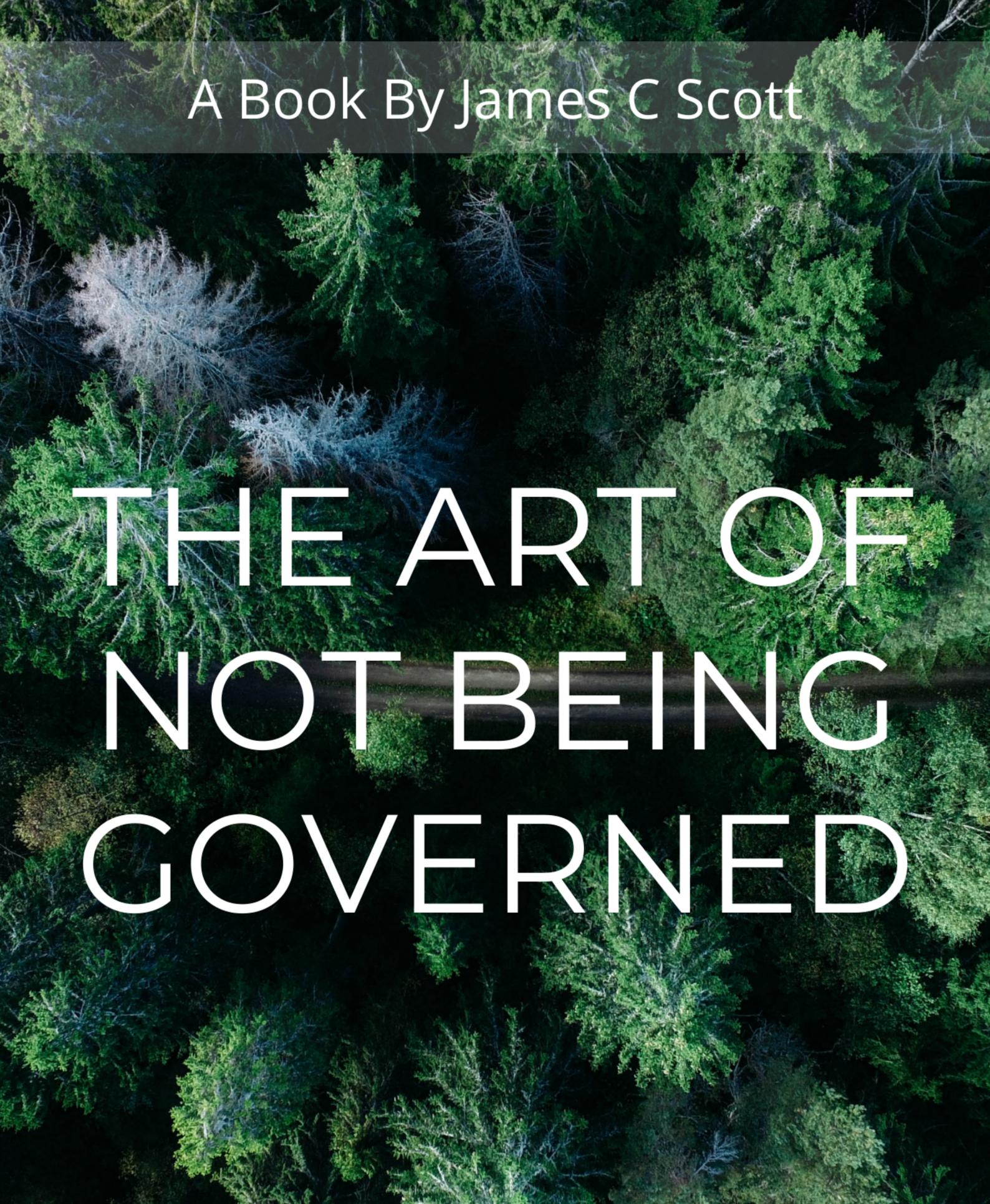
"It's a reference to something a friend said to me earlier. I'm not leaving. And I'm not leaving you folks to fend for yourselves. I'll probably end up getting my aura shattered for this. But you have my sword or axe or whatever when this inevitably turns into a fight."

"Do you have a sword?"

"If it comes to that, maybe. I attuned to Bloody Grin over a year ago when I was betrayed by another apprentice Wizard. Let's hope it doesn't come to that. It's Bloody Grin after all."

"You attuned to Bloody Grin?"

* The Nobility of the Hungry Empire are strange creatures within the major realms. They are inhabitants, as are the free tribes and the ordinary citizens of the empire. But they are also archetypes, roles that one performs, mythic clothing one wears like a cloak. One can be born into the nobility and abandon the archetype. These folk remain a noble by right of birth. Likewise, one could be a common citizen or even a member of the free tribes and be elevated. These people are allowed to wear the archetype of the Nobility.



A Book By James C Scott

THE ART OF NOT BEING GOVERNED

HOW PEOPLE HAVE ESCAPED EMPIRE
FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS

"Yeah. Not my smartest move. But I didn't have a lot of options. Churchill Ravana, the traitor I mentioned, he had attuned to Bloody Grin first. That's how I got the idea. Without him doing it first, I doubt I would have thought to try. I'm still not sure it was a good idea. But I'm still alive. So who knows."

"How many are attuned to Bloody Grin?"

"Two of us. Most don't survive very long. Bloody Grin isn't a safe attunement. I'm attuned. I think Churchill Ravana, Hilly, still is. I don't know any others."

I looked at the children before me. They looked like veterans of a war already. Some wore hollow eyed stares. Many had scars, or misshapen noses previously broken. Several were missing fingers. These children had gone through hell. They had more than most people in the shallows ever would encounter. And they weren't considered adults yet.

"Do you know what the Dragon is?" I asked the children. The answer was an uncertain murmur.

"Anyone?" I asked.

A hand went up.

"Yes, go ahead."

"It's one of the Three Unknowable. It's Great Serpent. One of the Elders."

"Good," I answered, "That's a start. Do you know what that means?"

Silence.

"Alright. Let's start at the beginning. Mother of Discord dwelled in the darkness before space and time. She created the world as we know it, the world of the story. From this act of creation arose the Three Unknowable. First came the Firebird of Mystery. Next came the Weaver of Stories. And last came the Great Serpent of Ambition. And the Great Serpent is also known as the Dragon."

The crowd of children murmured with confusion. They didn't know much about the story of the First Tribe I realized. They were still part of the Hungry Empire. They weren't free yet.

"Any questions?" I said.

A hand rose, "Isn't ambition bad?"

"It can be," I answered, "But it can amazing. And its necessary. What gets done without the drive and motivation provided by ambition. You are fighting to be free of a dying empire. Without ambition you would be meekly walking to oblivion. You would be like the other broken citizens you pass every day. The Dragon is the patron of First Hero. And that is because, without ambition nothing happens. Empires and autocrats demonize ambition. They want you to be cogs in their empire, not free people with their own lives."

The lesson continued. The children had only a rough grasp of the story of the Freepath Tribes and the Song Seven. I told the story of the First Hero and his deal with the Great Serpent, the mighty dragon. I explained that all warriors carry a piece of Dragon Fire inside them. I explained that the First Hero does not always survive the tale. But that- because of First Hero- the tale survives.

"So you have to die?*" One asked,

"No always," I answered, "You will hear the voice of Great Serpent when your heart feels crushed by fear. When the world appears to be falling apart, you will hear the Dragon. The voice of Dragon is the voice that counsels courage. And sometimes that means death or great sacrifice. Yes. But if you are acting on behalf of a good story, you will not care."

"Is that why you're here?"

"It is."

I decided to go for a walk to clear my head. Tad joined me despite my protests.

* That's one hell of a disclaimer isn't it? Warning: being First Hero may result in you having to fight horrible monsters, receive little reward, have your youngest son turn to the dark side of the force, and even die horribly, possibly more than once. Applicants must bring their own weapon and arch-nemesis. Please apply in person. It's a wonder everyone doesn't want to be First Hero. Why isn't the Dragon having to beat applicants off with a stick?

"I am impressed by your commitment, you know. I expected you to run away, If I'm honest." Tad said.

"I've done that before. It never helps. The story finds you. I'm still terrified though. I didn't stop being a coward because I realized running was pointless. Do you have any idea how safe and predictable my life was in the Shallows* ? And I was good at my job in the Shallows. My worst challenge was an unpleasant coworker."

"Then why give that up? Anyone born in the Foglands would leap at the chance to have that kind of stability and safety. Why risk death for strangers that you met a day earlier?"

I stopped walking and considered Tad's question.

"Harbinger?" Tad asked.

"I'm not sure. It feels right."

"You're risking your life on a gut feeling."

"Everyone deserves freedom," I answered, "You all deserve a story that matters."

"You need to be alive to have a story."

"No you don't.** People die to be part of stories all the time. Soldiers and martyrs and activists and dissidents and more die to keep their story alive. People need good stories more than they need bread. But the story of the False King is corrosive to the soul."

"That sounds good. But it still means risking death for people you didn't know a week ago."

"It does. And that's crazy. But whatever the reason, my soul won't let me turn away."

"You aren't Gandalf you know," Tad said as we walked, "You won't return as Gandalf the White¹ if you're killed."

"I know that," I answered, "But as I told the kids, if I do my part right, then the story will

* He's having his Thomas Anderson moment, isn't he? Like Neo in the first Matrix film. I mean how bad was Neo's life? But it was still intolerable. The intolerable sense of being something that you aren't.

** He's right, dead people are great story fodder. One of the real dangers of serving the Sacred Story is that the story will use you as it needs. And those needs may involve your horrible death. Martyrs and tragic heroes are both essential parts of many great stories. First Hero frequently dies. The Last Princess frequently dies. Either member of the Dreamwalker can die. The Crown Prince frequently dies, and often wishes he had when the story doesn't kill him. Serving the story can be very hazardous to one's survival.

¹ Well yeah, he isn't Sir Ian McKellan.

The Ars Holistica



TABLOID
OF
ELDRITCH HORROR

continue."

I paused, "You didn't know what a Balrog was before, and now you know who Gandalf is?"

"We have libraries."

I raised my eyebrows, but continued, "The point is that the story continue. The point is not that I continue. The point is the story."

Tad shook his head, "I wish I had your commitment."

I laughed, and we continued walking in silence. I wasn't sure if I did have the commitment I was recommending, but I couldn't see another option. This was the correct answer. I knew this in my heart. The general consensus was that this whole thing was a bad idea heading for a worse end. Tad knew the Black and White had compromised them. I knew the Black and White had compromised us. And we were unwilling to stop. Despite everyone knowing that we were heading for disaster, we wouldn't stop. Holding off would be the better strategy. But they wouldn't hold off. And I wouldn't abandon them. And so we marched along towards whatever dark end awaited us.

"Why did Churchill betray you, do you think?" Tad asked.

I looked Tad, and thought for a moment.

"I don't know. Greed? Fear? Maybe he didn't trust the story."

"Shouldn't the story help us, rather than the reverse?" Tad asked.

"It's a circle," I answered, "We help the story. The Story helps us."

"That sounds like a line to appease children."

"It is. That doesn't make it false. The Story protects the free peoples, but doesn't protect any one person. Without the Story, the Hungry Empire imposes their story and devours

the world. So, maybe its a pretty lie to hide a necessary truth. I don't know. I know that without the story, everything dies. If I have to die to protect the story, I can't say that isn't right."

"Could you not restart the story?"

"That's what we are trying to do now. How easy does this feel to you?"

"Hard enough that I want to run away every day."

"Precisely."

The Dragon's Day celebrations were the usual raucous affair. Fire jugglers mixed with fire eaters. Face painters decorated the children. People watched theatrical renditions of the deeds and feats of First Hero as the emissary of the Dragon in the Story. A rebel handed me a spring green salad with sweet vinegar dressing early on. And I picked at it as I walked about the ramshackle hidden village, children running everywhere as I did. I ambled my way to the Initiation site. The initiation would be at a submerged room that has one been part of a subway during the age of the Mirrored City. Men and women were raking the hot coals for the initiation. I couldn't see Tad anywhere, which concerned me. But I focused on providing help to the people setting up the initiation. The children were shuffling into the room when Tad returned.

He did not return alone.

Tad walked in with about thirty Men of Black and White.

I stared at him, Frozen.

And then I gathered myself and lunged forward yelling "What have you done?"

One of the Knights stepped in the way. I called on Ring of Li Jun Fan to slam a sledge hammer fist into the Knight's chest and send him flying backwards. The Knights drew their pistols and three managed to shoot me before I came up a plan.

It wasn't a good plan, but I was out of good options. I reached out my mind and grasped



HUNTERS

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Capture and retrieval of runaway property guaranteed

the hilt of Bloody Grin in the void, drawing the blade from nowhere.

Tad grinned at this, and I blinked in response.

"That's mine you know," Tad said.

He drew Bloody Grin from void, and I watched it evaporate from my hands and appear in his. As he did so, his face shifted. Tad had been using some sort of artifact to disguise his features. And he couldn't maintain the focus with Blood Grin bearing down on his mind. As the mystic disguise fell away, I recognized the face of Churchill Ravana.

Several bullets struck as I tried to respond. I staggered, and then fell backwards into the void.

* * *

I floated in the void awash in pain.

"I'm in shock," I said to myself, "I'm dying, my avatar is cracking. All sorts of not good."

I did not move.

"You should get up Freeman." I said to myself.

I did not move.

"Those kids are going to die."

I tried to move, but found I couldn't manage it.

"Those kids are going to die."

My mind struggled against my unresponsive avatar, trying to make my broken body move.

I did not move.

"It can't end here." I snarled to my avatar.

"Are you afraid to die?" A voice boomed in the void.

I tried to look around, but couldn't.

"Who is there?" I asked.

"This is my day. Who do you think this would be? I request an answer. Are you afraid to die?"

My blood ran cold. I was speaking to the Great Serpent, one of the Three Unknowable.

"Anyone who says they aren't afraid to die is a liar. I am afraid to die. I'm more afraid of letting those kids die."

"I could return you to the fray."

"Then do it!" I yelled.

"You will likely die anyway."

"Dying to save the next generation is an acceptable end to my story. I'm afraid of it, but that won't stop me."

"Good. The rise, and rejoin the fight."

* * *

I reached out, back towards where my avatar lay crumbled on the ground*. I touched the crimson cord with my consciousness and activated it. The cord sparked and smoldered for a moment, and then burst into flame.

My eyes snapped open and the power of the crimson cord pulled me into the air on what looked like wings of fire. The knights stopped and several took a step back. Hilly stared in disbelief. I smiled.

* There is something intensely meta about having an out of body experience while one is astral projecting. It's like Inception's dream within a dream I guess. Don't think too hard about it. Your head will hurt.



**EVERY MONSTER
WAS A MAN FIRST.**

WASTELAND 3

"Hey Hilly. Guess what?"

I paused.

"You! Shall not! Pass!"

The halo of fire erupted around me, flared and dissipated, setting me on my feet as it did.

The Knight closest to me drew his sword and moved to face me. I lunged forward. The Ring of Li Jun Fan glowed. I struck the knight center mass. Hurtled backward, knocking over several other knights as he went.

"I've still got the ring." I said.

Hilly nodded, "You do. But I've still got this!"

He drew Bloody Grin from the ether*. He snarled and lunged at me. Rather than try to dodge, I focused on drawing the sword as well. The blade flickered in the air, and then so did we as we grappled for control of the cursed sword. Trying to hold onto the sword felt like trying to hold onto dry sand.

"It's mine!" Hilly screamed, and we struggled.

As Hilly and I grappled for Bloody Grin, I noticed movement at the edge of my vision. I risked a glance. The remaining rebels, including the children, were moving to my defense.

Hilly saw me looking and grinned, "They're going to die trying to save you."

"You don't care either way. You aren't one of the faithful of the empire, you're an opportunistic parasite."

"You're right I'm not of the empire. I just think it's funny!"

I went quiet, thinking. Then I smiled.

* Churchill Ravana was drawing the sword from the Akashic Archive, the so called infinite library. Churchill had also attuned the cursed sword Bloody Grin, which means he could also draw the sword at will. This is how artifacts and reliquaries work. But only one person can use an artifact or reliquary at any one time. If somebody else is using it, you cannot draw it from the Archive. You must draw it away from the person currently using it. Which is much more difficult.

"Let's test and see if you're of the empire shall we?" I raised my voice so that the rebels could hear me, "I've got this! You must flee! The children deserve freedom and a better story!"

I stopped trying to attune Bloody Grin, and watched it rematerialize in Hilly's hands.

"Suicide is it?" Hilly said with teeth bared.

I drew out the reliquary of the Elder Cain and focused on my attunement to it. I felt a wave of force emanate out from my sternum. The wave pushed Hilly backwards until he reached the knights. I looked behind me and saw the wave pushing the rebels back as well. I was the eye of a tornado as both groups struggled to overcome the power of the reliquary.

"Looks like the Elder Cain disagrees with you Hilly. You've chosen your side in the conflict."

Hilly snarled and Bloody Grin pounded on the edge of the wave.

"Can you even hear me in their Hilly?" I asked, "I have some control when I'm using that sword. But Bloody Grin swallows you whole, doesn't it?"

The knights began to work their way around the edges of the field projected by the reliquary of Elder Cain. And I watched, with worry. They might catch the rebels. The rebels weren't in the clear yet. In fact, as I watched, I realized that the knights were moving too fast. They were going to catch up anyway. The kids weren't going to make it, unless I did something. My mind raced as I tried to think of my options. The knights knew I wasn't the main target. They were here for the rebels and I was a painful distraction. I couldn't deactivate the reliquary. I needed something strong enough to make them try and push through the reliquary's aura.

What did I have?

I nodded.

"You think, you can escape me!" I yelled, "I am Professor Harbinger! And you are just a

few more mooks before me. And when I finish dealing with you, my wanted poster will promise immunity from three tribute cycles instead of two!"

The knights stopped. And they turned back to look at me. I could see the calculations, even through their sun glasses. I watched as the rebels stared at me, realizing what I was doing. The knights advanced on me.

I smiled. The knights began to push against the aura from the reliquary. My ears popped as the reliquary pushed back.

The reliquary shuddered and cracked under the strain. I looked down at the reliquary as it struggled, and then back to the escaping rebels.

"Fly you fools." I whispered.*

To Be Continued!

Freeman Harbinger

WILL RETURN...

...NEXT FULL MOON!

* I understood that reference.



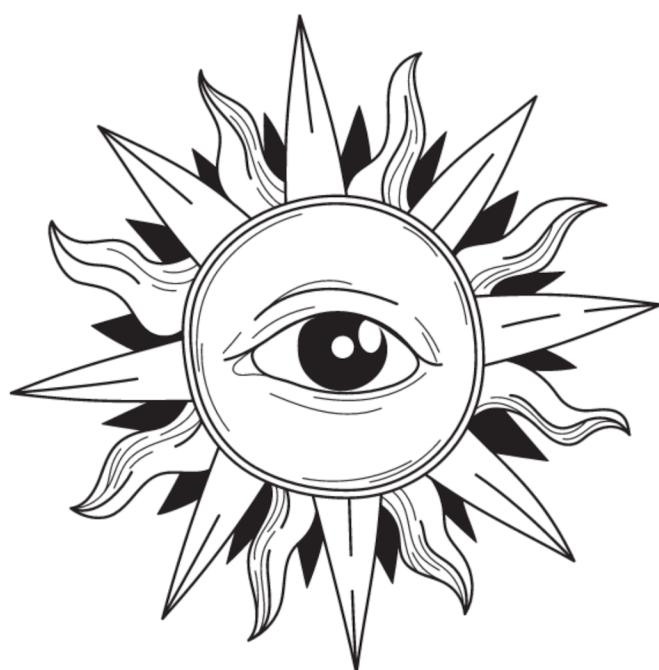
GEMSBOK CIGARETTES



CLASSIC FLAVOUR
HALF THE CARCINOGENS



A GUIDE TO
The Song of Seven





The Lunar Month of

Warm Spring

Begins on the New Moon

The Days the Survivor

Begins May 30

The Days the Primal

Begins Jun 6

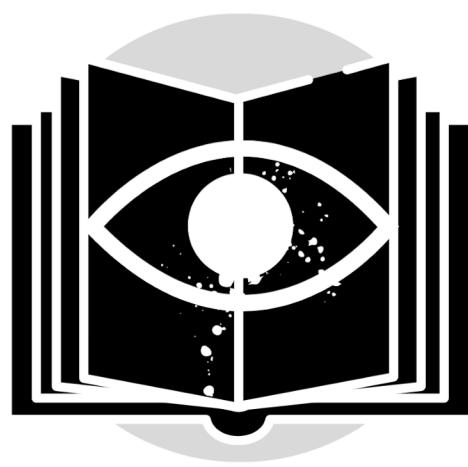
The Days the Shepherd

Begins Jun 13

The Days the Sleeper

Begins Jun 20

Ritual



The Poison Forest

The Story of the Poison Forest

When the Scavenger Folk seek to become the First Tribe, they arrive at the site of Home Village. But the land is poisoned from the work of the Hungry Empire. Falsenight's oil has saturated the soil. Starheart's radiation contaminates the dust. The Harvester's chemicals have leached into the earth and the water. And the human waste left by the Devourer has left human transmittable diseases. People get sick. People develop lead poisoning. People get cholera. People get radiation poisoning. People get typhus.

First Mother seeks out an answer and meets with a witch named Ghost Talker. The Witch is willing to help, but demands something in return. The Witch teaches the tribe vermiculture composting in exchange for their modern vehicles and fuel. After many failed attempts to compost, they finally succeed. But the people are still sick. There are still contamination illnesses.

First Mother meets with a witch named Red Cat Crimson, who teaches how to use super-accumulator plants to remove toxins from soil in exchange for their modern fertilizers, pesticides, cleaning chemicals, and household chemicals. The people use super accumulators. But they do not know where to put the super-accumulators. People mistake the Super-accumulators for food plants and somebody eats them and gets sick.

First Mother seeks advice, and a witch named Granny Cat's Paw offers help in exchange for all their canned food. Granny tells First Mother her to have the people create the Poison Forest: a place to put the toxins. The Poison Forest will serve as a sacrifice ground where people try to bioremediate and bind toxins as best they can. The tribe begins to build the Poison Forest, but people are still getting sick and it is hard to grow food.

First Mother meets a witch who calls herself the Blackwood Lady. She offers to help First Mother in exchange for the coal that the Tribe is still using for heating and cooking. The Blackwood Lady shows the people mycoremediation. With the witch's help, the people encourage mycelium and mycorrhizal fungi to grow and the plants begin to flourish. But people are still getting sick.

First Mother seeks out help, and a witch called the Red Ring Lady offers assistance in exchange for all their remaining plastics. The Red Ring Lady teaches phytoremediation for the purpose of transforming toxins into less toxic versions. But people are still getting sick.

First Mother meets a witch called Ash Mother. In exchange for a promise of safe passage for those who practice witchcraft and wizardry, Ash Mother teaches humanure composting and proper latrine building. And finally, with everything learned and their last connections to the Hungry Empire gone, people stop getting sick.

The Poison Woods

Keeping a Poison Forest

A Poison Forest is not a garbage dump, but a living ecosystem built from plants and fungus that can breakdown and sequester human toxic chemicals. Every Free Tribe maintains a Poison Forest. The village cemetery is built within the Poison Forest. Any things contaminated by the Hungry Empire are left in the Poison Forest. The Poison Forest is far enough from the village to keep the people safe, but close enough to be within walking distance.

The Celebration of the Poison Forest

The Celebration of the Poison Forest is a ceremonial cleansing of homes. Homes are cleansed with high proof alcohol and boiling water where possible. Possible contaminated items are offered up and a parade is held to the Poison Forest. The contaminated items are left to the Poison Forest and the tribe spends time managing the Poison Forest. Prayers and Offerings are left at the Poison Forest's altar.



non stare in lumine



TRADITION OLDER THAN EMPIRE

**CAPITALISM IS A
CANNIBAL FEAST WHERE
THE PARTICIPANTS HAVE
AGREED TO EAT EACH
OTHER LAST.**



MOSTLY SAFE ~ USED BOOKS

THE SLEEPING BEAST

BOOKSTORE

LOSE YOURSELF IN ANOTHER WORLD

Doctrine



The Path of the Warrior

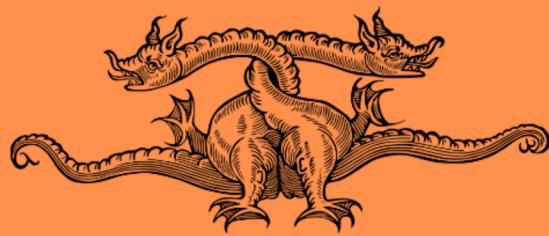
There is no difference between an adult and a warrior. All adults are warriors. If one reaches the age of majority and is not a warrior, then they are an old child- but not an adult. Growing old is mandatory. Growing up is optional. In the empire the idea of growing up meaning giving in. It means giving up your resistance. it means accepting your role as a slave and accepting your place as a cog: a gear in the Locust King's great machine of devastation. That is now what adulthood means to the free tribes. Adulthood is earned in layers among the free tribes. A child learns the second song: to accept responsibility and to retain the ability to walk away. A child learns the third song: to think for oneself, care for oneself, and defend oneself. A child learns the four song: The laws one must follow to never fall to the way of the Locust. A child learns the fifth song: the skills of building one's homestead. A child learns the sixth song: the tools for crafting the laws of one's tribe. A child learns the seventh song: the skills to grow and deepen the culture of the tribe. An adult of the free tribes is a seed of the free path. They can be cast in any soil and they will grow into a new free tribe.

The child of the free tribe grows into a warrior. Because the free tribe is build of warriors who choose to join the tribe voluntarily, the adults of the free tribe are masters of their own fate. The adults of the Hungry Empire are slaves forced to pay for their own servitude lest they starve. The warriors of the free path are self sufficient, beholden to nothing. They contribute because they gain from the arrangement. The warrior is always free, even if caged.

The path of the warrior is a course of education designed in concert with the Song of Seven and the Path of the Firebird to create humans who cannot be enslaved, who cannot be broken, who cannot be subjugated, who cannot be stopped.

Join us.

The Beast



The Beast & The Shepherd

Public House

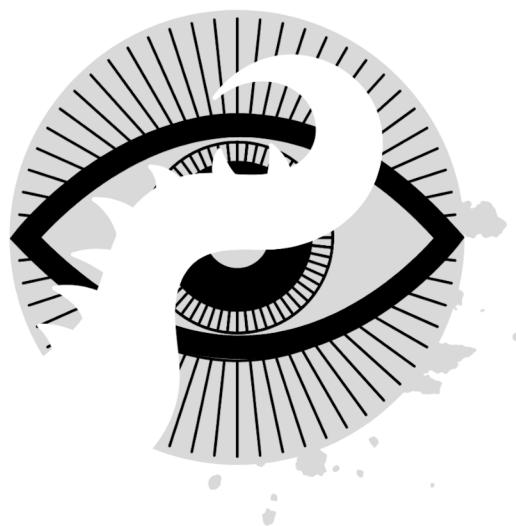
shepherd



**EMPIRE WANTS US ALL
TO HAVE ACTED AS
ACCOMPlices.**

**THEY WANT US
DEPENDENT UPON
THEIR SINS.**

Denizens

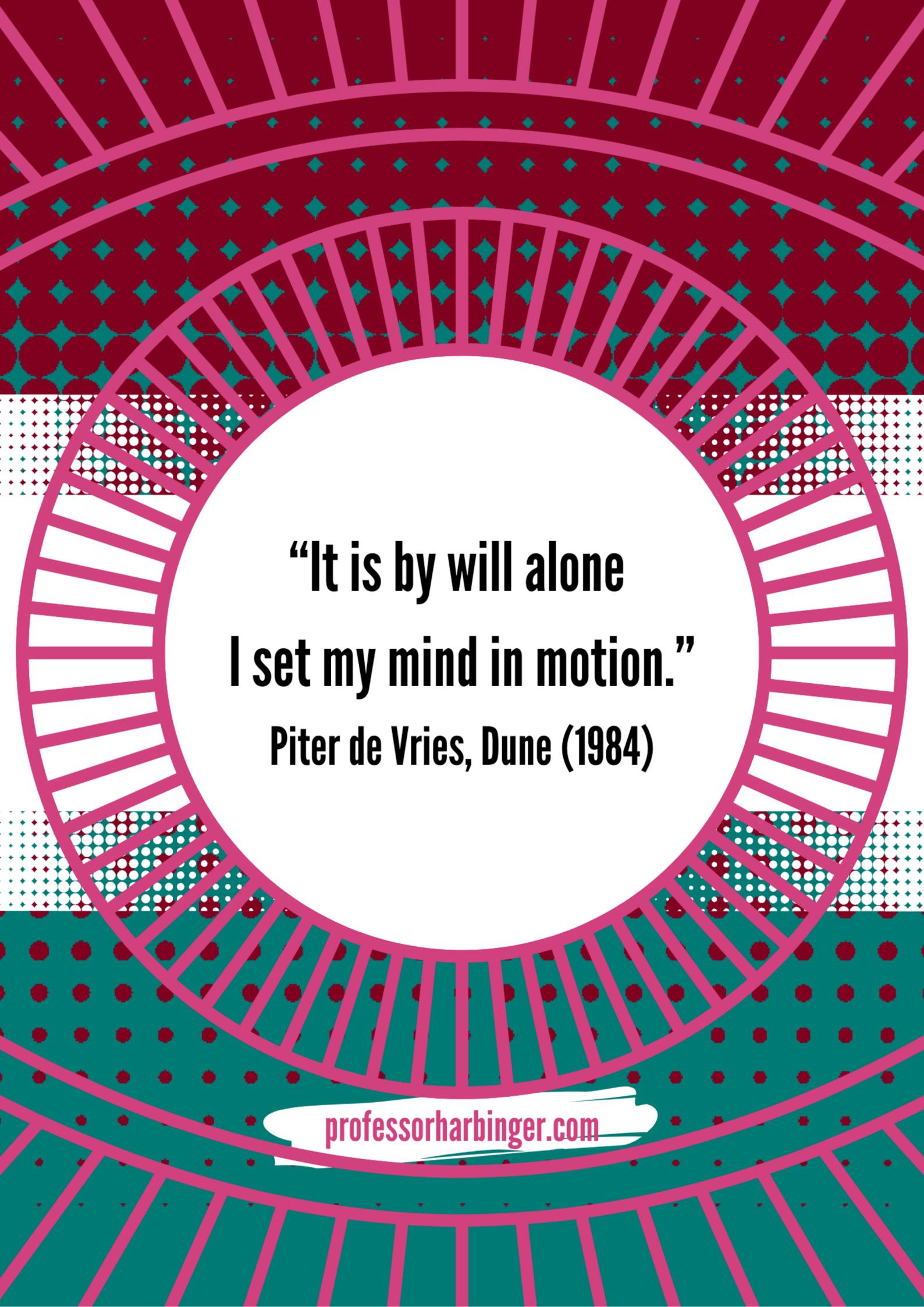


The Faithless

The Empire generates discontent like a modern factory generates pollution; not by intentionally, but still inevitably. The Empire is built to funnel resources up a pyramid of hierarchy, into fewer and fewer hands. Despite the fact that iterations of the Empire that distribute resources more broadly being those who last longer, all iterations inevitably concentrate resources into fewer and fewer hands. And as this happens, more and more imperial subjects grow discontent. And some of the discontented inevitably rebel.

Some rebels are Crusader Bureaucrats, those who seek to reform the Empire from the inside. They fail of course. But sometimes these Crusader Bureaucrats manage to paper over the inbuilt exploitation of the Empire and buy the Locust King a few more years on a slightly less gilded throne. Some seek salvation in the religions of the Empire like Good Charlatans. They excoriate other subjects of the Empire and implore them to be more noble and more pure. They blame the unavoidable corruption of the Empire on those crushed beneath its heel. Still others cry out anger. Lost Children who realize that their parents have no answers, they protest and march and write letters. They change a few little things from time to time, and often make the Empire marginally less oppressive for short periods. And some ignore these half measures and truly rebel. The Oil Cloth Rebels take arms against the Empire. Sometimes they seek to restore previous incarnations of the Empire, mistaking it for a golden age. Sometimes to merely succeed in replacing the previous incarnation, and thus become the Empire they opposed. A very few manage to oppose the Empire in its entirety.

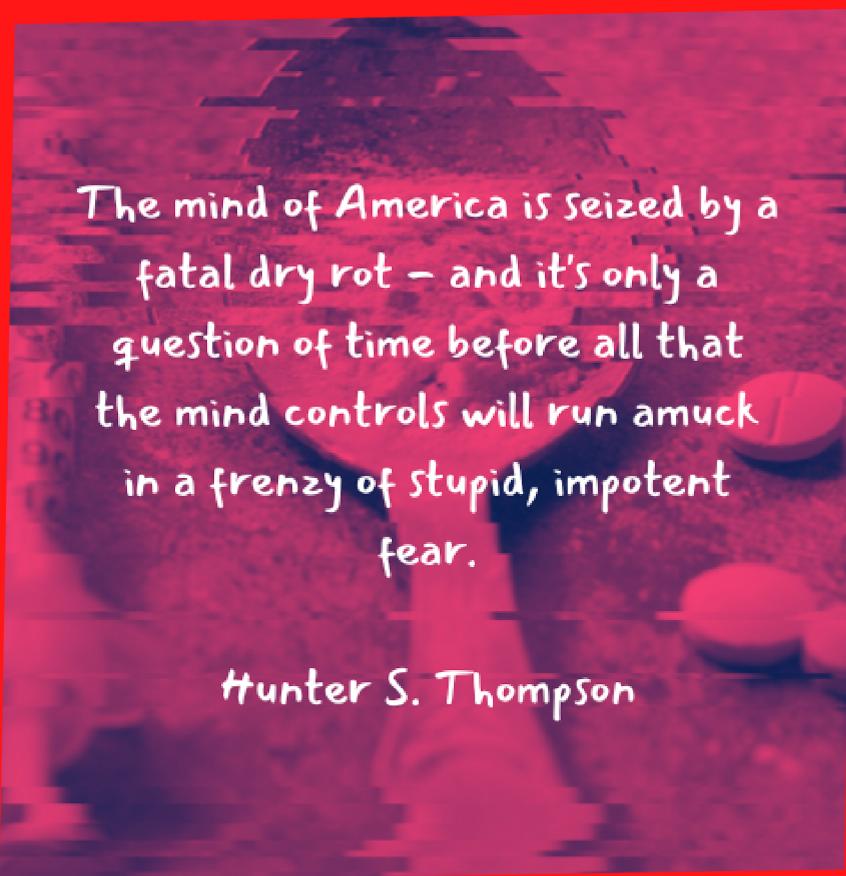
But the rebels cannot be cleansed from the Empire. The rebels are the inevitable result of the functioning of the Empire. Unless the Empire succeeds in destroying human nature itself, the rebellion will continue.



**“It is by will alone
I set my mind in motion.”**

Piter de Vries, Dune (1984)

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Robert Anton Wilson, The Illuminati Papers (1980), p. 2

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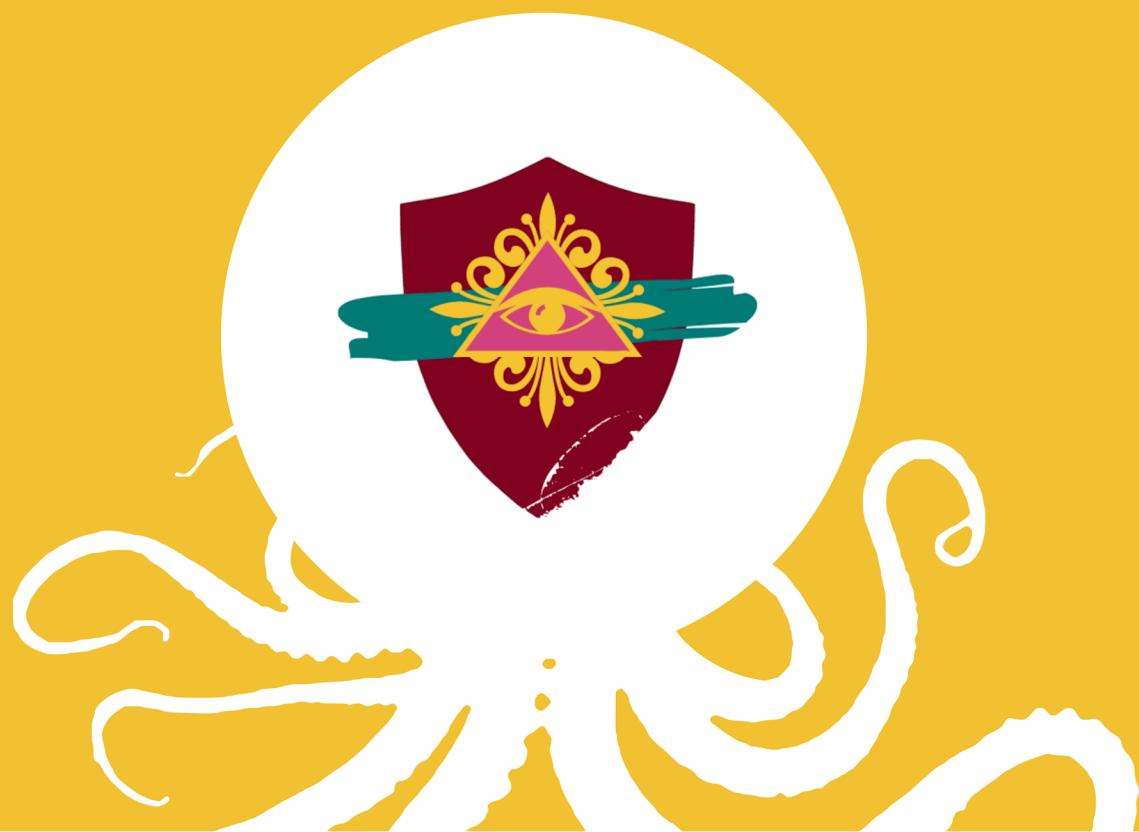
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